

**GAE COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY OF SENATOR PAUL DOYLE FOR PSB 148: AA
ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF ARTWORK FOR STATE BUILDING PROJECTS**

I would like to thank the GAE Committee Chairs, Senator Slossberg and Representative Morin, and the entire GAE Committee for agreeing to conduct a public hearing today on my proposed bill PSB 148. I do appreciate that this bill has generated some spirited opposition and I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to speak to you today.

In light of the current state budget crisis, I introduced this bill with the intent to save the State some bonding monies. While I recognize bonding monies are not direct monies in the annual state budget, they do cost the state money over the long term.

I learned of this 1% art requirement when I was challenging the construction of the new State Public Health laboratory in the Town of Rocky Hill. While I certainly appreciate the value of the arts, I thought the 1% requirement was costly and unaffordable in state buildings that have little traffic from members of the public, such as the restricted access public health lab in Rocky Hill.

The text of PSB 148 states that the 1% arts requirement should be repealed. On further reflection, I support the recommendation of Senator Slossberg and now believe that this 1% arts requirement should be **suspended** for a set period of time until the state budget and economy turns around.

It is my job as a legislator to advocate for legislation that saves money for the state of Connecticut. While it was not pleasant for me to introduce this legislation and it would have been easier to do nothing, I believe it is my legislative duty to introduce proposals that would help the state get out of the terrible crisis that we are currently experiencing. Often I feel the public does not appreciate the difficult budget decisions that the legislature will have to make this year.

While I respect and appreciate the strong sentiments of the opponents of PSB 148, I believe this is a worthy legislative proposal that must be weighed against the basic needs of the citizens in this State - the safety net - with our desire to promote art and the viewing of art. The former is a necessity that will face drastic reductions this year and the latter is a laudable goal in a climate when we have unlimited monies.

As I have listened to many on this issue, I have a suggestion that may achieve much of what this 1% artwork program attempts to achieve: to expand the current program that loans artwork of Connecticut artists to our state facilities and buildings. We could work with the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, the Connecticut Artists Collection, and other similar entities to increase the promotion of Connecticut artists by requiring that each existing and new state building be **required** to display prominently this artwork in their state buildings in public areas for the public to view. At little or no cost to the state, this expanded program would bring more exposure to the many talented artists in our state and help to promote their work. I would be willing to work with this Committee and the arts community to achieve such an expanded program.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to speak and I would be glad to answer any questions the committee members may have.